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To: College Health Service Directors

From: Patricia E. Kludt, MPH
Director, Epidemiology Program

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Kludt".

Date: August 2014

Re: **Regulations promoting awareness of meningococcal disease and vaccine**

Regulations amended in May 2007 promoting awareness of meningococcal disease and vaccine (105 CMR 221.000) require postsecondary institutions, regardless of whether or not they provide or license housing, to distribute to newly enrolled part-time residential students and all newly enrolled full- and part-time non-residential students (or parents or guardians of newly enrolled minor students), information approved or provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regarding the risk of meningococcal disease and the availability, effectiveness and risks of meningococcal vaccine. Such information is required to be provided at the time of initial enrollment.

Attached is a public health fact sheet titled *Meningococcal Disease and College Students* that can be used for this purpose.

Please note that students at institutions to whom 105 CMR 221.000 applies (i.e., newly enrolled part-time residential students and newly enrolled full- and part-time **non-residential** students, regardless of whether or not the postsecondary institution provides or licenses housing) are **not** required to be vaccinated or sign a waiver.

In contrast, 105 CMR 220.700 requires all newly enrolled full-time undergraduate and graduate students in degree-granting programs at postsecondary institutions (e.g., colleges) who will be living in a dormitory or comparable congregate living arrangement to:

- receive information about meningococcal disease and vaccine; and
- provide documentation of receipt of 1 dose of meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine within the last 5 years (or a dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine at anytime in the past), qualify for medical or religious exemption, or sign the form titled *Information about Meningococcal Disease and Vaccination and Waiver for Students at Residential Schools and Colleges*. (www.mass.gov/dph)

A postsecondary school is defined as any college, university or school accredited as a postsecondary institution by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Questions regarding this requirement, meningococcal disease or meningococcal vaccine can be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at (617) 983-6800.